

Abstract 129

TITLE: Behavioral Intervention Research on Alcohol and AIDS

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ISSUE: The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) supports a comprehensive research program on the relationship of alcohol abuse and the risk of HIV infection. The interrelationships between alcohol abuse and HIV risk behaviors are complex. To stem the HIV epidemic, it is critical to develop knowledge of how drinking increases risky behavior and decreases effective treatment for AIDS and apply this knowledge to the design and implementation of effective preventive interventions.

SETTINGS: To describe a variety of on going research on behavioral interventions for the prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS in alcohol using, abusing, and dependent populations in multiple settings. Settings include primary care, alcohol in-patient and out patient facilities, schools, prisons, HIV treatment programs, and other public settings.

PROGRAM: NIAAA has a substantial body of research that is beginning to yield important scientific results. Results from current work are influencing the design of large-scale behavioral trials of preventive interventions. Research is focused on three areas: 1) Primary prevention of HIV among alcohol-using and -abusing populations; 2) Basic behavioral research to develop a theoretical understanding of the relationship between alcohol and HIV risk behaviors as they apply to the prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS; 3) Secondary prevention among HIV-positive alcohol-using and -abusing individuals, particularly as it applies to adherence to use of AIDS medication.

RESULTS: This program of research is supporting 10 ongoing intervention trials. Recent results from school-based intervention programs have demonstrated reductions in AIDS risk behaviors among high-stimulus seeking/impulsive decision making youth. Research has also demonstrated reduced alcohol/HIV risk behaviors in gay-specific substance abuse treatment settings, and alcohol treatment programs in general. Service linkage studies in alcohol/HIV positive populations are providing insights into physician/patient communication behaviors to improve medication compliance.

LESSONS LEARNED: Alcohol abuse should be directly addressed in populations at-risk for HIV and among HIV positive individuals. Alcohol/HIV interventions are being adapted to specific settings and populations to reduce AIDS risk behaviors and incidence of infection.

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